

04/24/2021

Jill Bjorklund  
603 Circle Pines Dr #203  
Brainerd. MN 56401

Your Honor,

I am writing to you out of concern for my son, Dylan Robinson, who I understand has a sentencing hearing this week on the 28<sup>th</sup> of April. I wish to share a little background information about him and the type of person I know him to be.

Your honor, my son is a good person. He has never owned a weapon, never been in a fight; to my knowledge he has never even been hit or assaulted in any way by any person. He has a good heart. As a young teen he once rescued a kitten at the park. I have seen him stand up for smaller children who were being bullied by older kids in a group setting. He may be impetuous and rough around the edges, but he is not bad or a danger to anyone. Once a few years ago when he was living with me, he came home quickly and got an extra pair of shoes and a jacket, because he was giving them to a homeless man he had met downtown. He has friends of every age, class, race, and persuasion. He has more friends than I have acquaintances! I understand that his action during the George Floyd protests was regrettable and ill chosen, but I do believe he was genuinely acting out of anger and a deep sense of injustice. For that I am proud of him, if not perhaps of the actions themselves.

I am profoundly concerned about the affect time in the Federal prison system will have on Dylan. I feel it will force him to learn to think like the very thing we do not want him to be: a criminal. He will have to learn to be tough and crafty and careful in order to stay alive among people far more dangerous than a wild skater boy from Brainerd. I can't see how this will make anything better. I also fear for his safety in this politically charged time, given the nature of his charges. I know there must be punishment, because that is how our system is built, but I would implore that it be more rehabilitative than punitive. If he can be placed in a more secure setting, a halfway house, a group facility of some kind...he has expressed to me time and again over the past months that he wants to use this moment to turn his life around. He is working full time, has completed chemical dependency treatment, and has goals for his future. Together we are working on paying for a car he recently purchased. Please consider these factors when deciding his sentence.

One final story about my boy. A few years ago, he was out driving with a girlfriend on the winding roads here in lake country at night, and he accidentally struck and killed a fox. This upset him deeply, so much so that the next morning, the two of them went back out, found the animal, and buried it. His girlfriend at the time later purchased him a stuffed fox to honor the incident, which he later gave to me for safe keeping. It sits on the bookshelf near me as I type. The point of this perhaps silly story, Your Honor, is that Dylan has a deeply emotional and profound respect for life, buried perhaps deep under his somewhat careless exterior persona. He is a good soul and is certainly no danger to society. He tries to get along with everyone he meets. What he most needs perhaps is structure, self-discipline, and direction. I fear he will just be eaten alive in prison.

Please also remember, when you reflect on that horrible, fateful night, that there were many others involved. There were hundreds of people on the street with him, all eager for destruction. I believe though I am not well informed that others have been arrested for the same act as Dylan. This is just my personal belief, but for what it is worth, I am 100% certain that had my son been skating, asleep, on the moon that night...that building would still have burned. He was far from being the sole instigator. As he has never before done such a thing in his life, I feel his actions were very much inflamed by being in a mob situation. I am sorry, so sorry, that any of this happened to him. Believe me my mother heart has paid every day since. Dylan is never far from my thoughts, not for a moment: not at work, not even asleep. I love him more than I could ever possibly express.

I ask you respectfully to take these things, and the words I am sure you have heard from many of his friends and supporters, into consideration when deciding on the proper sentence for my son's actions. I beg you to be lenient. You hold his future, perhaps even his life, and my heart, in your hands.

Respectfully yours,

Jill Bjorklund

4/24/2021

FROM THE DESK OF

**Anthony Rice**

April 24, 2021

RE: Sentencing Matter of Dylan Shakespeare Robinson

Dear Chief Judicial Officer,

Thank you for allowing me to write to the court to express my opinion on the above matter under your review. I am a firm believer in the American legal system, and I realize that is a privilege to be able to be able to share my thoughts with the court in regards to sentencing. I also realize that letters like these may help the court shed more light on the defendant as an individual, since the evidence and testimony provided in court is limited in nature. Ever since I founded the Youth in Government club at our school, I have always been passionately involved in local government and our legal system. I routinely watch trials in my county (Hennepin) in order to learn as much as I can about the legal system, and through these observational visits, I have learned much about the courts and how they operate.

To be clear to the court, I have not spoken directly with Dylan since middle school, so my testimony is purely observational, and has not been influenced by being close friends with the defendant. I first met Dylan Robinson in the 4th grade; when I moved to Brainerd in Crow Wing County, Minnesota, we were assigned to share a desk together since our last names are so close together, alphabetically. To the best of my recollection throughout our school years, Dylan has never demonstrated a violent or aggressive nature, nor has he expressed disregard for other human lives or safety. Even in 4th grade, when most students are rebellious and not well-behaved, Dylan did not cause any undue problems in the classroom, was not disruptive, etc. I have personally observed Dylan treat his fellow community members with compassion, respect, and dignity. In our high school, there were definitely children who a penchant for criminal activity, but this was not so with Dylan. With the knowledge of many years of personal experience and observation, I firmly believe that Dylan will not reoffend. One thing among many that the courts must consider when sentencing a defendant is: how does the community feel about the accused being in their society? I can unequivocally say that I am comfortable with Dylan Robinson being free in our society, and I would prefer that he be allowed to continue treating his neighbors and friends with respect; rather than have him be placed in custody of the BOP and incur a charge to the taxpayers.

One of the other things that the court must consider during sentencing is the mindset of the defendant while they were allegedly committing the crime. I firmly believe, at the time of the alleged incident, that Dylan was not in a criminal mindset. While his actions allegedly demonstrated a criminal element, the mindset was not that of a criminal. I believe that Dylan was under the impression that he was helping the community, and certainly the crowd around him would have given him that impression. In short, Dylan thought he was helping the community and minority community members. I firmly believe that if Dylan was not in an environment where he was being so enthusiastically encouraged, the alleged crime would not have taken occurred. Dylan simply thought that he was helping his neighbors and friends. I would also ask the court to reflect on the fact that Dylan may have been under the impression that the eventual destruction of the structure was inevitable, since the crowd around did eventually breach and ransack the building, separate from the alleged act of arson. I would also ask the court to consider that at the time, multiple other buildings in the area were also engrossed with flame, and the building may have been destroyed even if the defendant didn't commit the alleged act.

One other thing that the court must consider when sentencing defendants is the message the court send to other potential offenders. I would ask the court to consider the overall "fairness" of this case, as he was only a very few arrestees from the unrest in Minneapolis this summer. Since everyone who committed a crime during that event was not apprehended by law enforcement, there are criminals in our community who have not and will not face justice for their acts. I would ask the court to consider that there are individuals who committed far worse crimes at the same time as he allegedly did, yet Dylan is the one who has the face the legal system. As a citizen of downtown Minneapolis, I can say that I firmly feel that the community would wish for Dylan to receive a minimal sentence. In fact, for this case, I would argue that any sentence in this case is not a "warning" to future criminals, but the sentence will just serve to enrage the community and lead to further unrest.

As the court reflects on my words, I would ask the court to consider that I wish to emphasize that I do not support criminal activity at all. Ever since the events of May 25th, 2020, crime has been on an exponential increase in Minneapolis, and I am very outspoken about the fact that I want the police to be more aggressive in our county. Not to get too far away from the topic at hand, but after a recent incident in which the police did not respond ever to a call for service, I interviewed the police chief about their response, and am now writing a book to share my thoughts about the criminal activity in Hennepin County. With that being said, I implore the court to deviate below the guidelines in this case, since anything else would be a miscarriage of justice.

Sincerely yours,

Anthony Richard Rice

**From:** A Shuttered Warehouse  
**Sent:** Saturday, April 24, 2021 10:18 PM  
**To:** info  
**Subject:** Character witness for Dylan Robinson

My name is Christopher Taylor. I've worked for the State of Minnesota in DHS for nearly ten years. Ive known Dylan for fifteen years. Dylan at the age of twelve was an Active Member in his Community. He participated in City Council Meetings, Fundraising Events and spoke about inclusion and how to build strong communities through Skateboarding at very young age. He moved to the Twin Cities to live and work multiple times. He's a very talented Skateboarder and used that to help promote smaller Minnesota based Businesses n Companies. Dylan has always spoke about equality. I believe in Dylan. And feel like he is a productive member of society.

Chris Taylor  
218 330 8027

Name:  
Colin Schlaeger

Email Address:

Zip:  
55056

Phone:

Hi my name is Colin Schlaeger. Dylan Robinson is a good friend of mine. Him and I met at Minnesota Adult/Teen Challenge and were roommates. I have struggled for a long time with alcoholism and Dylan has been one of the most influential people in my life helping me stay clean. I'm really praying for him this week. Just want to let you know how proud I am of him for staying clean and living a productive life since we met last August. Thanks for your time!

Name:  
Grant

Email Address:

Zip:

Phone:

I just want to write in to show support for my great friend Dylan. He asked us to write something for the judge that would be sentencing him.

Dylan is a good person. It's really that simple.

We met a couple years ago and it's a joy anytime I'm able to see and hangout with him. He's really a caring, persistent, motivated person who I think just had a poor hand of cards dealt to him recently and I and others just want to see him get past anything he's currently struggling with. Please consider anything I've said when considering his sentence. We've all at one point been in the wrong place at the wrong time and I think this is that same example when considering Dylan's current charges.



**From:** Nina Loreal  
**Sent:** Monday, April 26, 2021 9:54 AM  
**To:** info  
**Subject:** The State VS Dylan Robinson

I am reaching out on behalf of a 23-year-old man. A 23-year-old man who does not deserve to have his life ruined due to the actions of hundreds of heart-broken civilians! They say "your mistakes don't define your character. It's what you do after this mistake that makes all the difference!" What had he done since this incident? He got sober and stayed sober, he found an amazing job that's part of a union, he got a new car. He's done nothing but improve himself inside and out! I'm asking the Prosecution to look within their hearts before trying to send away someone so young and full of life with so much to offer this world. I've watched Dylan's growth since he's been out of jail and I've never seen someone grow so much and turn their life around in such a short period of time. This man deserves a chance at a good life. He is loved by so many and nobody wants to see this young man sent away.